

MOBILITY MONITOR 2005



HOW ARE WE DOING?

It's the CMA's job to monitor how the transportation system is doing—from 215 miles of freeways and highways to 1,580 miles of arterial roads to eight transit services to miles of bicycle and pedestrian facilities. So how did the transportation system serve us last year? According to the CMA's 2003–2004 State of Transportation in Alameda County, it performed with mixed results, offering both good news and not so good news.

Freeways and Roads

Congestion

The 2003 congestion ratings offered a significantly different view of vehicle delays when compared to previous years. Day-to-day congestion on our highways decreased substantially, with total delays dropping by 19 percent. Even better, delays on the Top 10 Most Congested segments decreased 26 percent!

A close comparison between the 2003 and 2004 Top 10 list shows considerable movement in the ranks.

Alameda County freeways continue to dominate the Top 10 congested corridors in the nine-county Bay Area, claiming five spots. Reflecting the mounting hours of delay in the Livermore Valley, the I-580 corridor, which ranks first with the highest levels of congestion in the Bay Area, occupies three of these spots.

Staying Put. Despite the good news of decreasing delays, I-80 continues to be the most congested corridor in Alameda County.

Staying Relatively Put. For the first time since evaluating the performance of the transportation system, two segments on the same corridor shared the same congestion ranking (moving up slightly from third and fourth, respectively, to second): EB I-580, from Hopyard to west of El Charro (afternoon); and WB I-580, from North Flynn to Airway (morning)—travelers on this segment spent 45 more minutes in traffic.

Moving Down. Morning commuters in the southern part of the County spent 75 less minutes in traffic as congestion eased significantly. SB I-880, from Thornton to Stevenson to Dixon Landing, dropped from second to ninth place on the Top 10 list!

Moving Up. At the same time, three freeways were much more congested: EB I-80, from I-580 to Gilman (afternoon); EB SR-24, from



As the local agency responsible for congestion management in Alameda County, the Congestion Management Agency (CMA) strategically plans, funds and implements projects and programs for highway and transit expansion, local road improvements, transit maintenance and improvements to bicycle and pedestrian facilities.



continued on next page



The CMA's governing board is composed of elected officials representing all of the governments and major transit agencies in Alameda County.

For further information about the CMA, please contact:

Alameda County CMA
1333 Broadway, Suite 220
Oakland, CA 94612

Tel: 510.836.2560
Fax: 510.836.2185
Web: accma.ca.gov
Email: mail@accma.ca.gov

This is the sixth edition of *Mobility Monitor*, published by the CMA. The CMA, in cooperation with other local and regional agencies, determines which projects deserve investment priority.

Editor **Robyn Anderson**
Design and Production
Moore Iacofano Goltsman, Inc.



SR-84 Direct Connector. This project will reduce the delay to carpoolers and buses entering the SR-84 HOV lane from Newark Boulevard during the morning commute. A 1,500-foot HOV on-ramp will be constructed on westbound SR-84 to connect Newark Boulevard to the existing HOV lane on the freeway.

Ardenwood Park & Ride. AC Transit operates a number of Transbay express bus services. While ridership demand is high, there are a limited number of buses and an insufficient number of parking spaces for commuters. Expanding this lot will accommodate 100 additional parking stalls and will serve to encourage travelers to use express bus service and carpooling.

West Grand Avenue Transit Enhancements. This project will reduce delays to Transbay buses using the MacArthur Boulevard/Grand Avenue corridor and the I-880/Maritime on-ramp. It includes future I-880 HOV on-ramp improvements at Maritime Street and construction of various traffic signal modifications along West Grand.

SMART On the Move
Building on the success of the San Pablo Avenue SMART corridor, CMA and AC Transit are moving forward with another rapid bus corridor: an 18-mile stretch from Bay Fair Mall (San Leandro) to UC Berkeley. The planned route will operate along East 14th, International Boulevard and Telegraph Avenue, terminating at Bancroft.

The East Bay SMART Corridors Program improves transportation safety, efficiency and regional mobility while providing real-time information to agencies and the public. The \$35 million program applies a combination of Intelligent Transportation System and traffic engineering improvements to enhance the travel experience along the corridors.

Community-Based Transportation Planning Underway
As part of their Lifeline Transportation Network, MTC identified several low income areas where transportation needs are not being met. To better meet these needs, neighborhood residents are being asked to help identify transportation gaps, solutions, costs and potential funding sources.

Last spring, the CMA completed the Central Alameda Community-Based Transportation Plan, focusing on low income portions of an unincorporated area of Hayward. The CMA is launching a second community-based planning process to assess similar needs in West Oakland, East Oakland and in two Berkeley neighborhoods.

MOBILITY MONITOR 2005



HOW ARE WE DOING?

It's the CMA's job to monitor how the transportation system is doing—from 215 miles of freeways and highways to 1,580 miles of arterial roads to eight transit services to miles of bicycle and pedestrian facilities. So how did the transportation system serve us last year? According to the CMA's 2003–2004 State of Transportation in Alameda County, it performed with mixed results, offering both good news and not so good news.

Freeways and Roads Congestion

The 2003 congestion ratings offered a significantly different view of vehicle delays when compared to previous years. Day-to-day congestion on our highways decreased substantially, with total delays dropping by 19 percent. Even better, delays on the Top 10 Most Congested segments decreased 26 percent!

A close comparison between the 2003 and 2004 Top 10 list shows considerable movement in the ranks.

Alameda County freeways continue to dominate the Top 10 congested corridors in the nine-county Bay Area, claiming five spots. Reflecting the mounting hours of delay in the Livermore Valley, the I-580 corridor, which ranks first with the highest levels of congestion in the Bay Area, occupies three of these spots.

Staying Put. Despite the good news of decreasing delays, I-80 continues to be the most congested corridor in Alameda County.

Staying Relatively Put. For the first time since evaluating the performance of the transportation system, two segments on the same corridor shared the same congestion ranking (moving up slightly from third and fourth, respectively, to second): EB I-580, from Hopyard to west of El Charro (afternoon); and WB I-580, from North Flynn to Airway (morning)—travelers on this segment spent 45 more minutes in traffic.

Moving Down. Morning commuters in the southern part of the County spent 75 less minutes in traffic as congestion eased significantly. SB I-880, from Thornton to Stevenson to Dixon Landing, dropped from second to ninth place on the Top 10 list!

Moving Up. At the same time, three freeways were much more congested: EB I-80, from I-580 to Gilman (afternoon); EB SR-24, from

As the local agency responsible for congestion management in Alameda County, the Congestion Management Agency (CMA) strategically plans, funds and implements projects and programs for highway and transit expansion, local road improvements, transit maintenance and improvements to bicycle and pedestrian facilities.



continued on next page

continued from previous page

I-580 to the Caldecott Tunnel (afternoon); and NB I-880, from 1/4 mile south of the HOV off-ramp to the Bay Bridge (morning).



Joining In. Reflecting the mounting congestion in the Livermore Valley, EB I-580, in the vicinity of Greenville Road, joined the Top 10 list. Also making the list for the first time: WB I-80, from the Bay Bridge to Fifth Street (afternoon); and EB SR-92, from Industrial to I-880 (afternoon).

Moving Off. Morning travel through the Sunol Grade continues to improve. Ranked fifth in 2003, this stretch of SB I-680 did not make it to the Top 10 list. Morning commuters on SB SR-84, from Newark Boulevard to the Dumbarton Bridge and afternoon commuters on NB I-880, from Fremont to Tennyson, also found relief. Both these segments of freeway dropped off the list.

Travel Speed

Another way of gauging performance of the transportation system is to measure the Level of Service (LOS) on roadways. Many changes were observed between 2002 and 2004. Similar to the congestion ratings, LOS varied widely: some freeway segments improved notably, while others degraded notably.

During the morning, commuters on SB I-680, especially between SR-84 and Scott Creek, moved at much higher speeds: from 27 to 64 mph—resulting in an astonishing jump from an LOS F to A. This remarkable improvement is likely due to the opening of HOV lane in 2002 and the continuing economic slump.

During the afternoon commute, freeways operating at LOS A rose dramatically, from 17 to 34 percent. At the same time, however, freeways with LOS E and F increased from 20 to 29 percent. During the afternoon, commuters on:

- ➡ EB SR-24, from I-580 to Fish Ranch Road, traveled almost 20 mph faster (nearing 40 mph).
- ➡ NB I-680, from Scott Creek to SR-84, slowed from about 46 to 31 mph.
- ➡ NB SR-13, between Joaquin Miller and Hiller, slowed from 52 to 29 mph.
- ➡ EB I-580, between I-680 and Santa Rita Road, traveled no more than 10 mph.

continued on next page

MAKING PROGRESS

Despite the State's ongoing fiscal crisis, 2003/2004 was an active year for the CMA:

The Board adopted an Implementation Plan for Regional Measure 2 monies (bridge toll increase to \$3.00). The legislation is expected to generate \$3 billion over 35 years.

The East Bay SMART Corridors Program successfully decreased congestion along San Pablo Avenue—with an astounding 66 percent increase in ridership and a 17 percent decrease in travel time. Of the increased ridership, 19 percent formerly drove alone.

Environmental documentation for proposed carpool lanes along I-580 in the Livermore Valley was reinitiated after being suspended due to the State financial crisis.

The Board adopted the Countywide Transportation Plan, the long-range policy document that guides transportation decisions and articulates the vision for Alameda County's transportation system.

The Board adopted the Congestion Management Program, setting forth strategies for implementing the long-range Countywide Transportation Plan.

continued from previous page

Accidents

Although freeway accidents throughout Alameda County decreased seven percent since 2002, there was a 17 percent drop along the I-680 corridor. Of the Top 10 congested freeways, eight had lower accident rates.

Road Repair

Since 2002, the miles of freeway needing rehabilitation increased by 56, to 292 miles. Of this total, nearly 42 percent of the poor pavement conditions are on I-580.

Transit

The eight transit operators continue to work to create a responsive, reliable and coordinated system. Contrary to the overall decline of ridership since 2001—a result of the economic

Despite fluctuations in the past decade, transit ridership has gradually increased 21 percent since 1993.

downturn—transit operators reported an 11 percent increase in ridership. Much of this increase can be attributed to BART's extension to the San Francisco Airport, focus on heavily patronized bus routes and the non-commute hour ferry services.

As in the past, time spent in cars was significantly less than the amount of time spent on transit. Transit travel times, particularly by bus, have degraded considerably. This is probably due to AC transit service reductions.

Bicycle

The 2001 Countywide Bicycle Plan proposes approximately 492 miles of bicycle facilities. In the past four years, 72 miles were added to the 120 miles of existing facilities. By the end of 2003, 34 percent of the countywide system was complete.



CONTINUING SUCCESS AT SUNOL GRADE

In 2001, I-680 between State Routes 84 and 237—commonly known as the Sunol Grade—was Alameda County's third-worst bottleneck. With such a dubious distinction, the CMA put together a comprehensive package of improvements to reduce traffic congestion on this well-traveled thoroughway. A large part of the success in reducing delay and improving safety

can be attributed to the new carpool lane that allows cars with two or more occupants to bypass southbound congestion.

According to the 2000 Census, Alameda County workers were slightly more inclined to use an alternative mode (carpool, transit, bicycle or walk) to arrive at their workplace as compared to workers in the rest of the Bay Area.



Recognizing that the Sunol Grade offers a promising location to explore value pricing as a way to further tackle congestion—a Bay Area first—the CMA Board authorized a demonstration project. The project was formerly known as HOT (high occupancy toll) lanes and is now referred to as SMART Carpool Lanes. These lanes offer motorists the choice of paying a fee to use a faster-moving lane, thereby reducing their time in traffic.

On September 19, 2004 the governor signed AB 2032 (John Dutra), authorizing implementation of the SMART Carpool Lanes. In the coming year, the CMA will develop a public outreach and marketing program to introduce the concept to neighboring communities and travelers.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Alameda County's freeways remain the most congested in the nine-county Bay Area. Maintaining the existing system and expanding its capacity and efficiency requires creative transportation strategies. Building off past successes, the CMA looks forward to initiating a number of innovative projects and programs.

From Bridge Tolls to Projects

In May the CMA Board set out a plan for allocating Regional Measure 2 monies. The CMA is actively spearheading a cooperative effort between partner agencies to improve mobility, traffic safety and operations in several locations in the County.

Tri-Valley I-580 HOV Lanes

As a main interregional corridor serving thousands of commuters, I-580 is integral to connecting people to jobs. It is also a significant freight corridor, connecting farm products and distribution centers in San Joaquin Valley to the Port of Oakland.

The Caltrans PSR reports: by 2025, average daily traffic will increase by nearly 43 percent, with westbound afternoon traffic increasing an average of 95 percent!

Unfortunately three of the 10 worst commutes in the region run through the I-580 Livermore Valley corridor. The I-580 HOV Lane Project is intended to reduce the delays that plague East Bay commuters in these freeway segments.

The Top 10 Most Congested Corridors in Alameda County



The initial phase will focus on bringing congestion relief to the corridor by constructing an interim eastbound HOV lane on I-580, from Tassajara Drive to Greenville Road (including auxiliary lanes at several interchanges). Subsequent phases will widen the westbound direction and construct improvements to the I-580/I-680 interchange.

Regional Express Bus

The CMA and AC Transit are joint sponsors of the Regional Express Bus program, consisting of several projects aimed at improving mobility and air quality.

SR-84 HOV Lane Extension. This project will reduce delay for carpoolers and buses approaching the start of the

westbound SR-84 HOV lane at Newark Boulevard during the morning commute. Specifically, the project will extend the westbound HOV lane on SR-84, from Newark Boulevard to I-880, and modify the southbound I-880 off-ramp to provide an HOV bypass to connect to the extended westbound HOV lane.

continued on back page